MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SENIOR SERVICES

MEASLES

More than just a rash

Current situation

Updated: April 2025

Vaccine uptake continues to decrease in Missouri, making children more vulnerable to measles.

ST. LOUIS CITY

The statewide kindergarten exemption rate for the MMR vaccine in 2024 is 5.20%, which is up from 3.50% in 2023.

KINDERGARTEN VACCINATION RATE
STATE OF MISSOURI (2024)

90.14%

PRELIMINARY, SELF-REPORTED DATA FOR STUDENTS WITH TWO DOSES OF MMR VACCINE

2019 STATE VACCINATION RATE: 94.60%

KINDERGARTEN VACCINATION RATE
ST. LOUIS CITY (2024)

73.98%

PRELIMINARY, SELF-REPORTED DATA FOR STUDENTS WITH TWO DOSES OF MMR VACCINE

KINDERGARTEN EXEMPTION RATE
ST. LOUIS CITY (2024)

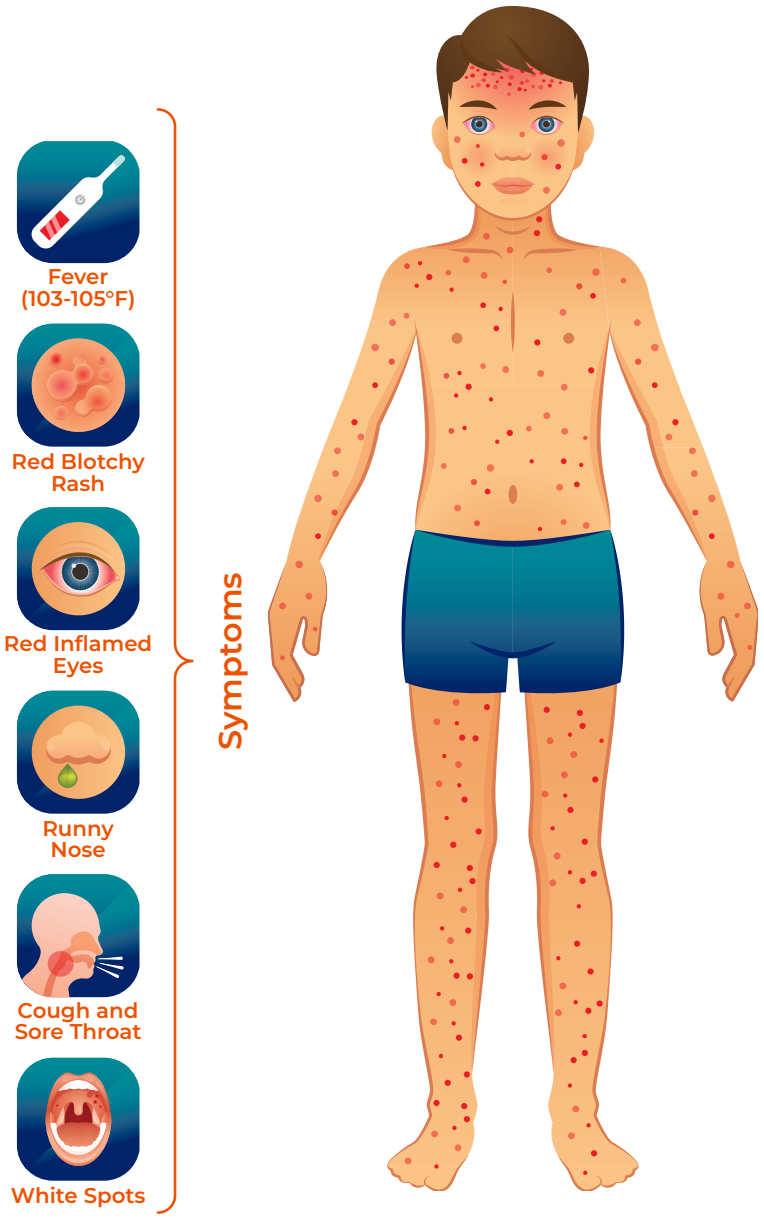
3.42%

PRELIMINARY, SELF-REPORTED DATA FOR STUDENTS WITH TWO DOSES OF MMR VACCINE

What you need to know

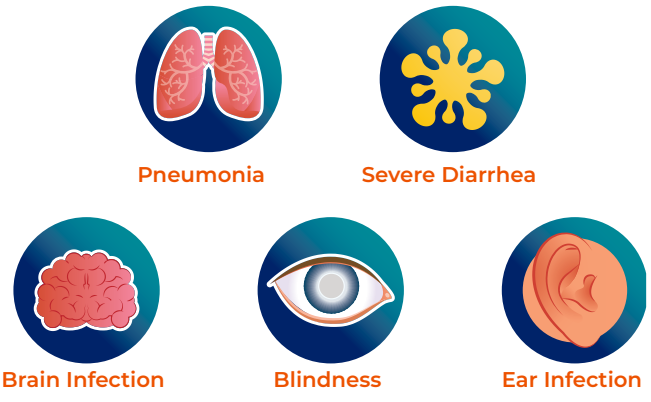
1. Measles is a very contagious disease. **One person with measles can easily pass it on to 9 out of 10 people around them who are unvaccinated or do not have natural immunity.**
2. **Measles can be very dangerous, especially for babies and immunocompromised adults, and a significant proportion of measles cases will need hospitalization.** One in 5 infected persons develops pneumonia, which could be fatal. In some cases, a brain infection may occur and result in swelling, brain damage or death.
3. **Herd immunity** is crucial for preventing disease outbreaks in the community and protecting vulnerable populations who cannot receive vaccines. It can be achieved by 95% of a community being fully vaccinated by two doses of the MMR vaccine.
4. Missouri's measles vaccination rate of 90.14% is **too low to protect our kids from outbreaks** based on preliminary school-reported data.
5. Two doses of the MMR vaccine provides **97% lifetime protection against measles.**

Measles Quick Facts



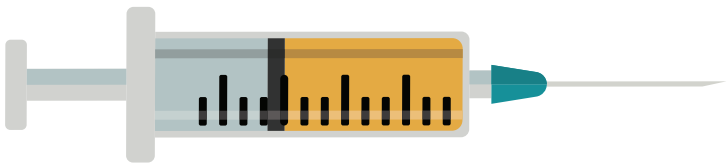
- **Most measles cases are among preschool children, adolescents and young adults.**
  - Anyone who isn't vaccinated is at risk of getting measles, regardless of age.
- Measles symptoms usually appear in **two stages, starting 1 – 2 weeks after a person has been exposed to the virus.**
  - The first stage starts with a runny nose, cough, a rising fever and eyes may become red and sensitive to light.
  - The second stage begins about 3 – 7 days later and includes a high temperature and a red blotchy rash that begins on the head and works its way down the body.
- A person with measles is **contagious from 4 days before the rash appears until 4 days after the rash appears.**
  - It spreads through the air when a person with measles coughs or sneezes and can live in the air for up to 2 hours.
  - It can also live on surfaces.

Severe Complications



Vaccination: Safe and Effective

Two doses lasts a lifetime, providing 97% protection



Vaccination offers the best protection against measles. Children should be vaccinated against measles at 12 – 15 months old and again at 4 – 6 years old.

Scan for more